

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1           1. (Currently amended.)       A network interface unit for communicating data  
2 packets over a at least one non-secure network between client devices on a at least one  
3 local area network (LAN) and ~~an access node~~ for a secure virtual private network (VPN)  
4 comprising

5           means for directly connecting to said at least one LAN,

6           means for connecting to said at least one non-secure network,

7           means for authenticating at least one of said client devices seeking to access said  
8 VPN, thereby establishing at least one authenticated client device,

9           a configuration server for sending configuration information to said at least one  
10 authenticated client device,

11          a GUI server for presenting at least one menu to at least selected authenticated  
12 client devices,

13          means for receiving at least a first message reflecting selections from said at least  
14 one menu, and

15          means for accessing said at least one non-secure network using information in  
16 said at least a first message, and

17          a security server for establishing a secure connection over said non-secure  
18 network between said LAN and said access node.

1           2. (Original)   The network interface unit of claim 1 wherein said configuration  
2 server comprises

3           a memory for storing configuration information for at least one client device, and

4           means for retrieving configuration information for at least selected ones of said  
5 client devices from said memory upon subsequent authentication of said at least one  
6 client device.

1           3. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 2 wherein said configuration  
2 information for each authenticated client device comprises information received on  
3 behalf of each of said client devices upon an initial authenticating of respective ones of  
4 said client devices.

1           4. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 3 wherein at least one of said  
2 client devices is a computer, and wherein said information received on behalf of a client  
3 device is received from one of said computers.

1           5. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 4 wherein said information  
2 received on behalf of a first computer is received from said first computer.

1           6. (Currently amended.) The network interface unit of claim 1 wherein said  
2 configuration information for each authenticated client comprises information related to  
3 connections to said at least one non-secure network.

1           7. (Currently amended.) The network interface unit of claim 6 wherein said  
2 information related to a connections to said at least one non-secure network comprises  
3 information relating to at least one dial-up connection.

1           8. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 7 wherein said information  
2 related to at least one dial-up connection comprises information relating to at least one  
3 customized dial-up connection, said information relating to each of said customized dial-  
4 up connections comprising a customized dial-up string of characters to control a dial-up  
5 modem connection to said non-secure network.

1           9. (Currently amended.) The network interface unit of claim 6 wherein said  
2 information related to connections to said at least one non-secure network comprises  
3 information relating to at least one connection having a fixed IP address.

1           10. (Currently amended.) The network interface unit of claim 6 wherein said  
2 information related to connections to said at least one non-secure network comprises  
3 information relating to at least one connection having a temporary IP address.

1           11. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 10 further comprising a DHCP  
2 server for providing said temporary IP address.

1           12. (Currently amended.)     The network interface unit of claim 10 further  
2 comprising a DHCP client for obtaining a temporary IP address from said at least one  
3 non-secure network and providing said temporary IP address for use in said connection.

1           13. (Currently amended.)     The network interface unit of claim 6 wherein said  
2 information related to connections to said at least one non-secure network comprises  
3 information relating to at least one point-to-point over Ethernet (PPPoE) connection.

1           14. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 2 wherein said memory  
2 comprises a removable memory module.

1           15. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 14 wherein said removable  
2 memory module stores additional information comprising web pages for presentation by  
3 said GUI server.

1           16. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 1 wherein said means for  
2 authenticating comprises means for comparing client ID and password information  
3 received from a client device with information stored at said network interface unit.

1           17. (Currently amended.)     A network interface unit for communicating data  
2 packets over a at least one non-secure network between client devices on at least one  
3 local area network (LAN) and at least one ~~access node~~ security portal of a secure virtual  
4 private network (VPN) comprising

5           means for receiving data packets from said client devices ~~by way of~~ on said at  
6 least one LAN ~~LANs~~,

7           means for multiplexing said data packets into at least one packet data stream for  
8 delivery to said at least one non-secure network,

9           a security server for modifying said packet data streams in accordance with a  
10 secure communications protocol by encrypting packets in said data streams and  
11 encapsulating resulting encrypted packets,

12           a DNS server for providing network destination address information for at least  
13 selected ones of said data streams.

1           18. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 17 wherein said security server  
2 comprises an IPsec server.

1           19. (Currently amended.)     The network interface unit of claim 17 further  
2 comprising

3 means for receiving at least one stream of data packets from said non-secure  
4 network,

5 said security server further comprising a firewall for filtering out packets in said  
6 ~~streams~~ at least one stream of received packets that are not from said VPN network,

7 said security server further comprising means for modifying said packets in said  
8 at least one stream of received packets by decrypting said packets in said at least one  
9 received data stream and decapsulating resulting decrypted packets, thereby providing at  
10 least one received data stream of decapsulated, decrypted packets, and

11 means for demultiplexing said at least one ~~stream of received data packets~~  
12 received data stream of decapsulated, decrypted packets to form at least one  
13 demultiplexed stream of data packets for delivery to said at least one LAN.

1 20. (Original) The network interface unit of claim 19 further comprising means  
2 for authenticating client devices on said at least one LAN, and wherein packets from  
3 authenticated client devices on said at least one LAN that are received at said network  
4 interface device are processed as packets received from said VPN.